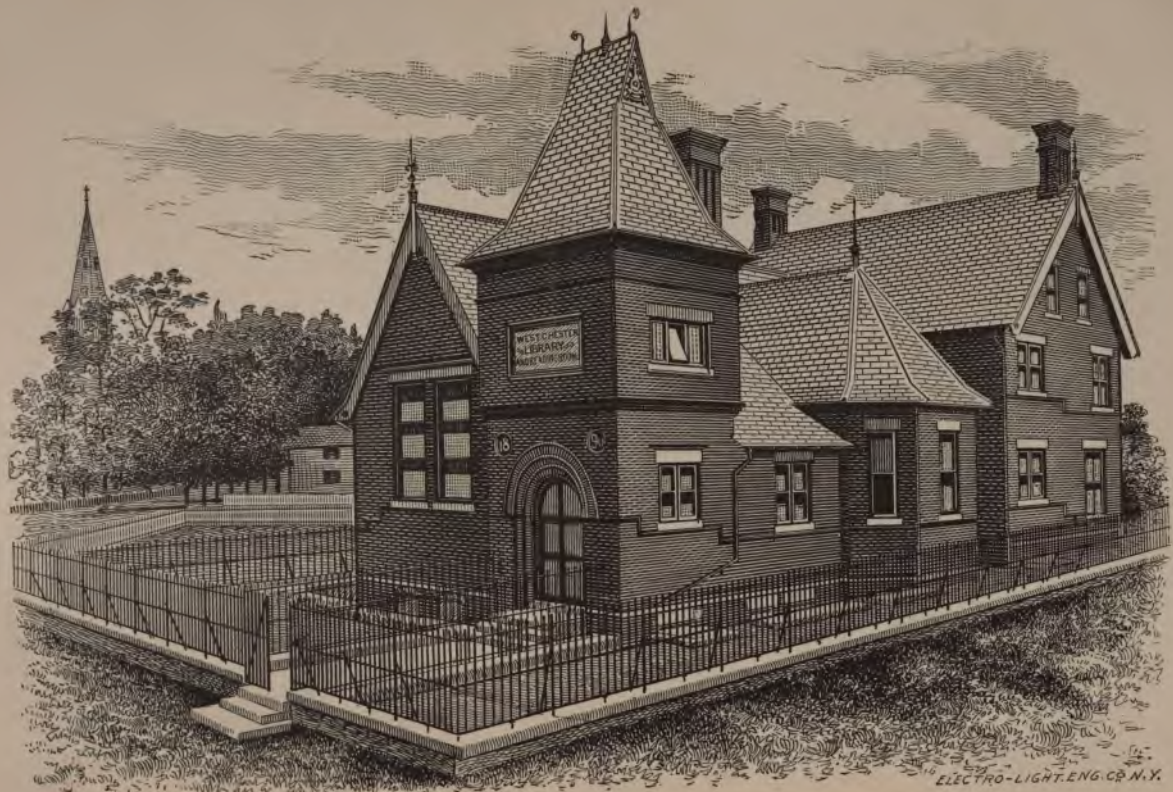
Souvenir



"This Library is for all creeds and all nationalities—share and share alike."—COLLIS P. HUNTINGTON.

SOUVENIR

— OF THE —

WEST CHESTER LIBRARY

— AND —

READING ROOM.

1891.

N. Y. C. PROTECTORY PRINT,
WEST CHESTER, N. Y

Raison d' Etre.

The courteous press notices in our village and metropolitan journals concerning the dedication of the Westchester Library and Free Reading Room have been attentively read and carefully preserved by a number of our townspeople. There are many, however, who, distrusting the perishable nature of a newspaper clipping, have expressed their desire to have the proceedings published in more convenient and durable form. It is to gratify this reasonable request that this little *Souvenir* has been printed.

Our Free Reading-Room.

The Crowning Literary Event in the History of Old Westchester.

CHURCH AND STATE UNITE IN GLOWING TRIBUTE TO OUR YOUNG MEN'S BENEFACTOR— COLLIS P. HUNTINGTON.

Last Saturday evening, Oct. 7, 1891, was a red-letter epoch in the history of Westchester. Side by side in our new temple of Apollo sat those who may never congregate together again, until the final grand review! It was a gathering of christian gentlemen animated by one impulse--philanthropy—love of their fellow-man. We do not recall a similar meeting in this historic town, and the large attendance of our townspeople, their deep, respectful interest in and attention to the golden words of wisdom from the various gifted speakers showed how easily "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin." Mr. C. P. Huntington has not been long enough among us to fully appreciate the moral beauty of such a meeting in our old town. But others can. And in the light of such a meeting, so cosmopolitan in its character, so Christian in its spirit, and so noble in its object, Mr. Huntington has associated with the opening of his New Reading Room an era of peace and good-will which is fraught with bright promise.

INTRODUCTION.

At eight o'clock Mr. Huntington called the meeting to order in the following words:—

MY FRIENDS:—I am very glad to see so many here to-night. It means well for the future of this Institution, and is an assurance that it will succeed. In fact, it all depends upon you whether it is a success or a failure. I hope it will succeed or I should not have undertaken it. I turn this building over to you, and if it does good to this, as I hope it will to many coming generations, I shall be more than paid.

I shall ask Mr. Tabor to act as your Chairman to-night. I think he needs no introduction. You all know him I believe, and if you do not you have missed something which you ought not to have missed. [Applause.] Mr. Augustus Tabor will please take the chair.

In taking the chair Mr. Tabor spoke as follows:—

Address of Augustus Tabor, Esq.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FELLOW-CITIZENS OF WESTCHESTER :—

We have met this evening pursuant to the invitation of our fellow-townsman, Mr. Collis P. Huntington, in these beautiful rooms which he has provided, and I am sure that you will all unite with me in saluting him with sincere and heartfelt expressions of our respect and esteem.

It would be improper to anticipate any remarks which he himself will have to make on this occasion, and yet I would refer for a moment to the happy auspices of time and place under which we are assembled.

If we were to take up the daily newspaper as an index of the daily life of the community, we should find upon one of its pages the advertisements of those who, eager to dispose of their commodities, present their statements each one in its most alluring form ; another page contains the long record

of the employers and the unemployed, correlative and yet always somewhat antagonistic; turn the leaf and the stock market is shown, also divided into two parts. On the one side are those who would advance the prices, and on the other, equally sincere and earnest, are those who speak of getting down to real values and of the great danger of inflation. The political world claims another sheet. Those who are in office have very clear ideas of civil-service reform, while those who are out think that its provisions might well be postponed until after they themselves get in. Nor is this unrest limited to individuals. The city recognizes a rival in the neighboring city. The state challenges other states in its progress, and the wires are burthened with reports of the struggle for preëminence. From across the ocean come startling accounts of Russia's advancing in Asia, and demanding the passage of the Dardannelles. France challenges attention to its semi-warlike reviews and Germany with ever-watchful eye scans prospective battle-fields from behind her tremendous forts. The whole paper is full of self, self-seeking, self-indulgence, and self-aggrandizement.

And yet we have laid the paper down and have come here in peace. The week's work is done;

the counting-house and workshop are closed; the markets are all over; and the waves of political excitement break innocuous on the shore of the Day of Rest. We have no jar of discord here; we have no selfish aims to seek; we have met on the common ground of a common humanity and a common respect for a common purpose. The republic of letters is world-wide. The romances of Russia sleep side by side with the novels of Walter Scott. The science of France and the philosophy of Germany are at peace, and are in perfect harmony as their numbers breathe upon the lyre. The armor of our daily strife is unbuckled and we stand at ease. All is peace in the world where we would unite to-night. The very room itself is quietness and repose. There is not a single brick in these walls that has a selfish aim or purpose; each one is standing there honestly trying to do its business, to fill its place in upholding the structure. We are all here, therefore, in a pleasant place, in a pleasant hour for a pleasant purpose, and we turn with gratitude to this our friend who has given us this opportunity, and ask him for a further illustration of his aims and purposes in regard to this Institution.

Address of Mr. E. P. Huntington.

MY FRIENDS OF THE TOWN OF WESTCHESTER:—

I have asked you to come here to-night to take part in the opening of this Library and Reading Room for public use. I am not accustomed to speaking in public and scarcely know what to say that will be suitable, but I suppose the people of Westchester expect me to say a few words on this occasion.

I have often thought, since I came to Westchester to spend my summers, that in a town where there are so many young people there should be some place where they could spend their leisure hours in reading and playing innocent games, for I believe that leisure time, spent in this way, would tend to make them better and happier.

I have prepared this building for all who may desire to enjoy its advantages; but it will no doubt be used mostly by the young, who have

[illegible] HUNTINGTON

neither libraries nor reading rooms, and perhaps by some who have not even a home of their own. I shall therefore direct my remarks mainly to the young people.

I have been in business for many years, and have been reasonably successful, as I think nearly all will be, whose rules of life are as few and simple as mine have been. My life, with its long and varied experiences, is mostly behind me, and it is from the knowledge gained by experience that I can speak to the young who have seen but little of the world and who have a long journey before them with its many vicissitudes.

I hope that the young people of Westchester who are here to-night will come here as often as they can, and that they will enjoy coming so much that they will bring their friends with them.

I hope and *ask*, that you will all cultivate a spirit of kindliness one for another, each being ready, at all times, to do his or her part, so that the greatest amount of good and the least amount of evil may come to those who spend their leisure hours here. Let each one care for some one else, and let *all* be ready to look after those who have turned into paths that lead to harm, and seek with words of love and deeds of kindness to bring them back. If any should come here who are in need,

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ask them kindly what you can do to help them.

In no other way can the very atmosphere, which surrounds this place, be such that it will be felt for good by all who come within the circle of its influence.

You must keep in mind that these good results can be secured only by persistent effort, patient continued in well-doing, otherwise you may be discouraged in the very beginning of your work.

Let me urge upon you the importance of choosing the right path early in life. A wrong beginning is almost sure to result in a wrong ending. It is not difficult for any one to know the ways that are right from those that are wrong, for the lines are clearly drawn, and the rules that one needs to follow to bring success are few.

Let me urge the careful use of your time. To most of you, your time is your capital. That is a wise old maxim, "Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves." It is equally wise to say, "Take care of the minutes and the days will take care of themselves." In the improvement of your time care should be taken to lay up something for the seasons that come and bring no harvest, for such seasons come to all. Learn to live on a little less than you earn and thus always have a balance in the bank. This will add

much to your happiness and may keep you from many temptations.

In order to get the best results from the employment of our time it is necessary to have something in view beyond the getting of money. "Man cannot live by bread alone." It is necessary that mental wealth should be stored up, and the heart trained to kindly feelings and the hand to generous deeds. A kind word, a smile, or it may be a tear of genuine sympathy is often better than much gold to those who suffer. It is the doing of these things that brings the truest happiness to the giver and sends a ray of sunshine over those who are living under the shadows.

I hope that all who come will be careful of the books and see that they are not torn or unnecessarily soiled, and that all other things, in and about the building, are kept clean and in good order, for I think that now, as of old, nothing else comes so near to godliness as cleanliness.

When I was a barefooted boy living among the hills of Connecticut, my mother said to me, "My son, do the right as you understand the right,"—and she said it in such a tone that the sound of her words has followed me through all the years of a long and busy life. And allow me to say to you, the young men and women who are here: "Do

the right as each of you understands the right."

This Library and Reading Room are for all creeds and all nationalities; share and share alike. I hope and believe that all will give it their encouragement and moral support.

I have asked Brother Leontine, of the Protectory, Mr. Clendenin, Rector of St. Peter's and Rev. Mr. McMillan of the same church, Father McKenna, of St. Raymond's and Mr. Mattice, of the Presbyterian Church, to say a few words, as I am quite sure you will all like to hear them, and to have each bid the little Institution God-speed.

Mr. Hillhouse Read the Following

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

I. The Library is open daily from 9 A. M. until 10 P. M., and on Sundays from 2 until 9 P. M.

II. In moving about the room visitors will make as little noise as possible.

III. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited.

IV. Children under 14 years of age will not be allowed in these rooms except by special permission of the Librarian.

V. Visitors must take care of their hats, coats and other property, as the Institution will not be responsible for the loss of any article. Parcels, canes, umbrellas and books must be left with the attendant.

VI. Visitors must not monopolize particular papers or magazines for an unreasonable time while others are waiting.

VII. No books shall be taken from the building under any circumstances.

VIII. Visitors are not admitted to the alcoves except by permission and in company with the Librarian.

IX. All persons cutting, marking or mutilating books, periodicals, furniture, or anything about this building will be permanently excluded and proceeded against according to law. Visitors are requested to report to the custodians any infraction of the above rules.

X. Correspondence room to the right.

XI. All complaints or suggestions may be made to the Librarian.

The Chairman read a large printed card as follows:

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY AND READING ROOM.

These rooms are open daily from 9 A. M. until 10 P. M., and Sundays from 2 until 9 P. M.

In addition to the works in the Library, they are supplied with the principal daily and weekly papers, and with the monthly magazines of general literature.

All persons are invited to avail themselves of the benefits of this Library and Reading Room.

All reading matter is perfectly free, no ticket of admission being required.

Address of the Reverend Father McKenna.

MR. CHAIRMAN,—LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :—Although I hardly expected to be called upon so soon, yet it is with great pleasure that I appear before you, in response to the kind invitation of Mr. C. P. Huntington to say a few words in favor of this beautiful Library Building and Reading Room placed by him at the disposal of the people of the Town of Westchester. On entering this Library to-night, the first thought that came to my mind was, that this assembly is large enough to be a political meeting. Then Mr. C. P. Huntington must be very popular when so many come here to honor the occasion. That so many ladies and gentlemen are come here to be present at the opening of this new Library placed at the disposal of the general public, speaks well for the future usefulness of his handsome donation. If Mr. Huntington were a politician he would be a Flower—not a Fassett. since he gives us a daisy present. I do not think

from the rules and regulations just read, as I understand them, that there is any room for a "fassett" in this building. There are a great many buildings where a "fassett" is used, but no "fassetts" may be allowed here. This Library Building is intended, if I understand it, to be a resort where honest and useful recreation may be obtained. The people of this town, after the labors of the day, whether on the bench or at the bar, at the desk, or at the oyster beds in the Sound, can come here to spend an hour or two in the evening at a recreation both useful and refreshing to mind and body. Such recreation a business man like Mr. Huntington loves to feel. When a man is occupied all day from morning to night he requires a rest. For him this Library is of vast benefit. All thought of business is thrown aside for the nonce, and after an hour or two spent over a funny story or a scientific book from the Library he goes home to his family as much refreshed as though he had passed a whole day at recreation.

Why should we not come here? Mr. Huntington places this Library at our disposal. A gift of this kind is a great boon for the community. As Mr. Huntington has so well said, it is a great privilege for the young if they only avail themselves of the advantages afforded them. Some, it is true,

have libraries, but very few have large ones, others have none. All parties can come here and be supplied. The advantages of this library for the community are very great. Take our young men for example. Would it not be far better and more to their advantage to come here and take up one of the weekly novels, or one of the novels by Dickens, or one by W. M. Thackeray, or better still to take up the "Travels of an Irish Gentleman," by Tom Moore, Esq., or any one of those fine works of standard literature, and to pass the evening with them than to spend their evenings at a lager beer saloon? Look at the contrast. Consider the consequences. When a young man leaves this Reading Room he leaves it fully conscious that he has done a good deed, that he has done what an honest young man ought to do, that he has done what any young lady would approve of his doing. (Laughter).

But the young man who spends his evenings at the beer saloon (I am not a politician but I understand some of the terms of politicians) has what politicians call a "head on him" next day. And it is a pretty bad head too. Not a good head for a business man to possess. It would not be a good head for Mr. Huntington to carry down town with him every morning. (Mr. Tabor here interrupted

the speaker with the remark that Mr. Huntington never drank). Father McKenna (resuming):

I am very glad to hear that. I am very grateful to Mr. Huntington, that he has given me this opportunity, before this very respectful assembly, first, of thanking him for the kind compliment in inviting me to speak, and next, of showing that I am fully in earnest sympathy with this movement, and last of all, that if Mr. Huntington desires to come in here to have a rubber at whist, or a crack at old "forty-five," or a turn at billiards of an evening, I would only be too happy to accommodate him, as one of the players.

I hope that the young people of Westchester will accept the invitation of the generous donor and take a great interest in this Library and Reading Room. I also hope, on some future occasion to be able to compliment Mr. Huntington on the great and lasting good resulting from his action to-night in placing this Library and Reading Room at our disposal in the Village of Westchester.

If Tom Moore, Esq., the national bard of Erin, were here to-night, no doubt he would sing for us, after his own elegant fashion in sweet, encouraging tones,

Let us cherish

A Library like this.
Let looks of bliss
Around it well be blended;
Then take wit's beam
T' enliven the scene,
There's recreation splendid!

(Applause).

Address of the Reverend Mr. Mattice.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I think that this is a rare compliment to me, that I had no right to expect, being, as it were, a stranger among you. I had thought that perhaps my name had been better left off from the list on that account, if on no other. Yet if I say anything, Mr. Chairman, I shall say that I rejoice with an exceeding great joy in being permitted to be present at this house-warming of Brother Huntington's, to-night.

Your Chairman has suggested that those of us who were to speak might take our texts from Mr. Huntington's address. A text has been given to me—not, however, by Mr. Huntington—and one upon which I am very glad to have the privilege of speaking. I was told that in expressing publicly here, as one of many, in behalf of the public, our sense of obligation to Mr. Huntington that I might also, if I should see fit, express to him this fact: that we are particularly pleased with

this gift because it comes to us from the warm hand and heart of a man who still lives and moves abroad. (Applause). This is a gift which the public receives without that contest which sometimes disgraces our courts—without executors or contestants—which we get without any long and expensive litigation—which comes to us without having been first moulded into shape by the hands of a board of trustees, who may, perhaps, not have entered at all into the spirit of the giver of the gift, and who may, perchance, perform their functions in a perfunctory, or even slovenly manner. This gift has not come to us in this way. It is not one of those gifts—it is furthest from my thoughts to criticise—it is not one of those gifts extended to us by the cold hand outstretched from a coffin, and concerning which we sometimes have reason to fear that had the giver been permitted by Him who rules the destinies of all, to lengthen out the thread of his life, he would never have given to us at all. So we are glad to-night that the giver is present; that he still lives to watch over and develop the Institution which he has planted, and see that his plans do not miscarry, and to see that each plan is carried out to the end.

There is another reason by which our pleasure is enhanced, and that is that we have before us a

good example. You know that in Europe and America a band—a small but noble band—of men are trying with much pains to secure the settlement of a great many vexatious problems which confront the human race. If more of our wealthy men were of like mind with Baron Hirsch, of England, and many honored names of our own countrymen, many of those perplexing problems which are on the minds of men to-day would be settled, and many of those texts which are fruitful themes in the hands of political agitators for rousing political passion, would be taken from them.

Mr. Huntington has recognized the fact that a good deal of trouble comes from what we call simply weakness, and also that other fact which has passed into a proverb, that "Knowledge is strength," and has recognized the fact that that knowledge which shall be strength will come to us more and more as we acquire the stores of human experience that are laid up in books. He has therefore struck at the root of many evils at once when he gives to his fellow-men books—he has placed in their hands the root and source of power.

There are two problems which I think are of such great importance that they may well challenge the most earnest attention from every think-

ing man. One of them is, how to amass wealth. But men generally are not indifferent to the importance of this problem, and do not need to be reminded of it. The other problem is, how shall it be expended in such a way as to do the greatest good to the greatest number and afford the greatest measure of satisfaction to the owner of the wealth. The men who are solving this last problem are the men who are engaged in deeds of open-handed liberality—not in "charity," as we call it—not in the profuse expenditure of money, which the practical philanthropist recognizes as resulting too often in merely making the bad worse—but in such wise exercises as result in diffusion of learning out of such a library as this. I think the man who does this has solved the problem of how his wealth shall do the greatest good to the greatest number, and I think that the man who learns this while he is still living, and while he can give with his means that thoughtful oversight which shall insure that his aims shall not miscarry —that man has solved the problem of how his wealth shall give the greatest satisfaction to himself.

Now to-night in this opportunity of expressing our appreciation of the kind and generous heart which has given all this to us, it has been granted

to me (and I consider it a great privilege) to say that this pleasure is greatly enhanced by having Mr. Huntington still with us; enhanced by this, that we are not (as is too often the case upon occasions like this) merely doing honor to some memorial tablet fixed in the wall. We are not here to eulogize some man who has gone where the eulogies of men are become of very little moment. But Mr. Huntington has by the timeliness of his gift given us the pleasure of saying to him face to face that we are grateful for his beneficence, which has gone up and down through this country from Maine to Mexico seeking out soil that needed cultivation, seeking the proper tree to be planted in that soil, and then seeing that the tree was properly watered and pruned and fertilized—and that we are grateful that that beneficence is brought among us in this way, and that to-night we may express our thanks to him personally, and not to a board of trustees in the presence of some sculptured tablet on the wall, for this—what shall I say—this beautiful, this costly, this princely gift to the people of Westchester.

Remarks of the Reverend F. M. Glendenin Before Reading the Poem Written By Mr. Joel Benton.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—Mr. Joel Benton, whose graceful and charming poems are seen from time to time in the "Century" and "Harper's" and other magazines, hearing of this gift of Mr. Huntington, has written for this happy occasion a little poem of four stanzas; and (unknown to Mr. Huntington, or so far as I know, to any one else here) has sent it with his kindest wishes and congratulations to Mr. Huntington and the people of Westchester, with the request that I read it. Mr. Joel Benton, ladies and gentlemen, was a friend of the late Horace Greeley—so personal a friend that it has influenced his hand-writing. I therefore must ask that you kindly allow me to read, not the original, but a transcript of it.

The Library Gift.

[TO C. P. HUNTINGTON.]

You give us from your generous hand
  Far more than gems or glittering gold,
Food for the mind, by genius planned,
  That rolling years shall not make old.

For books outlive our narrow life,
  And save the heritage of time;
Theirs is a solace free from strife,
  Embalmed with prose or edged with rhyme.

What Plato thought, what Shakespeare wrote,
  Are more than all our passing days;
While we their wit or wisdom note
  Our privilege shall be thy praise.

Though centuries come and centuries go,
  And all that live return to dust,
This noble gift shall live and grow
  Beyond the reach of moth or rust.

Address of the Reverend A. McMillan.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :—No text was given me; but it was just as I took my place here the Chairman said, with determination in his eye, "only five or ten minutes," so that I am handicapped to begin with.

It is very hard indeed to say much after the celebrities who have gone before me. The poem which has just been read, and the allusion which has been made to the illustrious founder of the New York *Tribune* brings to mind the illustrations which used to appear in "Harper's Weekly" during that election for President, when Mr. Greeley was a candidate. Wherever Mr. Greeley was represented there was usually a scrap of paper sticking from his coat tail pocket inscribed: "Little me, too," which meant the one who was running for Vice-President and who was quite insignificant. It is somewhat with the feeling of being "Little me, too" that I stand here. There

is one comfort in this—I do not stand here to represent St. Peter's Church—that has been done already,—but I beg to represent the "boys," and to be one of the "boys," and you may put me down as speaking for Empire Engine Co. No. 1. [Laughter].

There is an overwhelming thought which comes to us—how shall I illustrate it? You perhaps have gone into a building where there was more than one musical instrument, and when they are tuned very much alike—to concert pitch—you will notice how, should one of those instruments be played upon, each one of the others is uttering a sound from sympathy with the instrument which was struck. Those instruments may not be in the same room—but as long as the waves of the air will carry the vibration to that string it will touch sympathetic chords. Just so. I am sure that each heart here to-night is vibrating in sympathy with the noble thoughts which have been uttered, and even those who, because this is a busy night, are unable to be present, feel in their hearts that which is reverberating through each one's heart here.

We are very much like that young man who was paying attention to his first young lady, or at least she was the first one to whom he had thought

of telling about what an agitation there was under his waistcoat. And he had gone to her house repeatedly with a firm determination to say what he thought; but she was entirely unconscious of what was going on in his mind; he would hint and hint, but no hint would she take. So, seated on a sofa together one night, he plucked up courage and said: "Maria, this life without you is like a country town in which a circus never sticks;" and she said: "You think so?" Then they sat for a long time, she going on with her work, and he twirling his thumbs. He made several attempts to get at the subject, but she was entirely oblivious to his plight. Finally he shouted: "Fire! Maria, fire!" "Where, George, where?" said she. "Here, Maria, here," clapping his hand to his breast. That is just about the way we feel toward Mr. Huntington to-night.

Mr. Chairman, do not expect us to put in words all that we feel; for the emotions of the heart are always far more than the lips can express. But believe us when we say, that these heart-furnaces of ours are all aglow and blazing with the fires of gratitude, which this generous gift of Mr. Huntington's has kindled.

We always value a kind action according to the measure by which it is free from any selfish motive.

A good deed penetrates to the heart of the recipient according to the freeness of love that seeks to express itself. What can we find of selfishness in this? We can only wish and pray God's blessing upon the good man who has distinguished Westchester with such an Institution as shall make it a reputation among the villages and towns of the world. Bring Westchester up again before the Legislature—it won't be annexing Westchester to New York, but it will be New York's object to be attached to her. [Laughter.] I have not been in Westchester so long without knowing something of the importance of the place; of how admirably it is situated, exactly in the centre of the earth: for measure around the earth whichever way you will, you will find we are exactly the centre. [Laughter]. And here shall be the moulding place for the character, because our benefactor has brought us into the society, and introduced us into the friendship of the best lives that have ever lived. Whatever our needs may be the man only has to come here and ask for some book on a certain subject, whether it be Shakespeare, or Lord Byron or Thackeray. The best thoughts which have been preserved are here. Here again they live by their thoughts which have been crystallized, and can be reproduced. Here is a place

which is to be a blessing to us. Every one can come here, and no matter how poor, how rich, here will be a place for every one. Those who have enormous libraries, those may not feel the need of it; and, I speak now as one of you, I know what good there is to come out of such a place as this, and feel grateful for the gift. Mr. Chairman, thought carries back to me of the days of Capernaum. When your Saviour and mine entered into that town, there came out the servants of one great man, who came to the Master with the request that He would cure a servant of his who was very dear to him, and they mentioned one good quality after another—they mentioned his patriotism, because he loved their nation, but the crowning thing which was to move the heart of God who walked this earth then was that "he had built us a synagogue;" that is a meeting place, and so while prayers go up from each, when they mention to God that our benefactor has built us a meeting place, he will obtain his reward; and I am sure that I utter the thought which is uppermost in every heart here when I say, God bless Mr. Huntington!

Address of the Reverend Brother Leontine.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I feel that we all owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. C. P. Huntington for this elegant structure and its appointments, and it gives me a great deal of genuine pleasure to be here this evening to take part in the opening of this edifice that is an ornament to our growing town and a standing monument of the munificence of the donor—one that will speak to future generations to instruct and amuse them, as I hope it will do to this.

A library is a people's university, a storehouse of knowledge, a granary of instruction, and in it may be garnered the best thought of the sages, the wisdom of the ancients, the culture of the refined and noble ones of the world. When we read the works of a great author our hearts are swayed by his thoughts and they wield a great influence over us. It is therefore necessary to choose the authors whose writings will influence

us for good, even while they instruct or amuse. We should gather the beautiful flowers of the genius of man but touch not the poisonous; for a book may elevate one to heaven or draw down to the lowest depths.

It has been well said "The Press is the eye of Providence and good books are his missionaries." As the chosen people of God were the missionaries that spread the light of truth to the Gentile nations, so too do good books often convey the light of truth to the mind, to illumine its darkness and enlarge the sphere of its knowledge. Reading either for pleasure or knowledge absorbs most of the leisure moments of many persons, and the person that affords greater opportunities for others to gratify their taste in this direction is a benefactor in many ways.

A few generations ago the amount of knowledge in the world was not as great as it is now. The march of progress has multiplied the world's stock of information, and it is a source of great pleasure to the knowledge-seeker to be able to come here and slake his thirst at the fountain which the generosity of our public-spirited townsman has provided.

Here may be gathered rich stores of knowledge. Here may the pleasant hour be spent without the

degrading contamination which the leisure hour often brings to those who know not how to use their time well. This is the people's place, the social exchange, a new moral force and one of culture also, which will exercise a powerful influence in the neighborhood and be productive of much good. These are the objects of its existence—these are the reasons of its being and the intention of our patriotic townsman in its erection. I am sure that you can do no act that will please him more than by making use of the opportunity which the structure opens out to you.

It is indeed a source of pleasure to Mr. Collis Potter Huntington that the inspiration which caused the erection of this building saw its realization during his own lifetime. Wealth is a gift of God, and he who uses it for the good of his neighbor is a true benefactor of humanity. He returns to the Lord what God so generously gave, for he that gives to the poor lends to the Lord. But I will not detain you longer. The building and its contents speak for themselves and gladden the hearts of the people of Westchester.

Address of the Reverend Brother Azarias.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—As an outsider I have little to say where so many good things have been so well-said, except to express the great gratification which I feel over the event of this evening. It is indeed a pleasure to be here—a pleasure to listen to the many beautiful things said in favor of the gentleman who has so generously endowed this town with this magnificent gift, this beautiful building in which we are assembled to-night. I have only to add my voice to the voice of those who have already spoken and congratulate the people of the town of Westchester upon the reception of this noble gift, and congratulate Mr. Huntington on having done so nobly for the town of Westchester.

We all know the value of good books; we all know what a source of enlightenment a free library in a town is—how rapidly and efficiently it, so to speak, levels up the general intelligence. We all

know how much is implied in the reading of good books—how sometimes the reading of a single passage in a single book is sufficient to change a whole life. Mr. T. W. Stead tells us, in the last number of *The Review of Reviews*, how in his eighteenth year, happening upon a poem of Lowell's called "Extreme Unction," its meaning and its lesson so sank into his heart that he never forgot it, and he could write on the margin of the little volume in which he had read the poem— "This poem has changed my life." No doubt, many of you remember the poem. It is the story of an old man, who, after his four score years upon earth, in his death-agony is overwhelmed with despair for the reason that he is about to appear empty-handed before his Creator—that he has not utilized the life God gave him—the health, the talents, the energy, the various gifts of body and soul, with which God endowed him—to the best advantage for his fellow-men. His selfishness had frozen the fountains of pity and charity in his heart. Looking back upon his lost opportunities, he asks—

> "What bonds of love and service bind
> This being to the world's sad heart?"

Mr. Stead profited by the lesson, and forthwith resolved that his life should not be such a blank. "The idea," he says, "that everything wrong in

the world was a Divine call to use your life in righting it, sank deep into my soul." He determined then and there the course that his life should take, and firmly resolved to work for the good of his fellow-men. Thus did the reading of one little poem give direction to a whole life. You remember how beautifully George Eliot in her *Mill on the Floss* speaks of the influence of the reading of some passages of the *Imitation of Christ*—that low, sweet voice of humanity that appeals to every heart and is to be found in every tongue—speaking the language of humanity to all in such words as are enduring and always find a response in every heart and sympathy in every soul. No doubt, the spiritual experience of Maggie Tulliver—so broadened and deepened by the chance reading of some pages in that wonderful book—was a reflex of George Eliot's own experience upon her first becoming acquainted with Thomas à Kempis. And so I might go on repeating instance after instance of how it is that the reading of a single passage in a book is sometimes enough to change the whole life. From this we can gather what an immense power for good a library is in a community, especially when that library is well selected, and when those who use the library have the good sense to read with system and under guid-

ance. Even as a good book may be the bearer of a life-message for right-doing, so may a bad book carry within its pages death-dealing poison, now sapping the reader's Christian faith, now undermining his moral sense till his will can no longer resist temptation towards wrong-doing. Therefore it is that we cannot overestimate the power a book may exercise for good or for evil.

I will not detain you any longer, Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen. I once more congratulate you and the town of Westchester upon this magnificent gift; once more I would express the deep sense of gratitude that everyone feels in his heart of hearts for the good that Mr. Huntington has this evening wrought.

Address of the Reverend F. M. Clendenin, Rector of St. Peter's Church.

If I had been allowed to select my own subject to-night, or if you had chosen it for me, ladies and gentlemen, I think you would have elected that I speak of the giver rather than the gift. And surely, if the giver were not here to be embarrassed by such statements; if it were not something furthest from his wishes, it would be a very pleasant privilege if I might show you, as I could by simply telling you a few facts, that this Reading Room, though a princely gift, was but one of many noble deeds constantly being done by the same hand. Yes, if I might be allowed to show you, as I could show you, what is better still—a thousand times better still—that these gifts come from a heart full of tender sympathy and most courteous consideration, from a life which feels not only for the sorrows and misfortunes which come to

men here and there, but which feels for the sorrows and misfortunes of the mass of men everywhere, and which stands ready—I am speaking very calmly—from a life which stands ready to do anything in its power to help its fellow-men. To such thoughts as these, though pleasant, we are not to be allowed to give expression. We may, I suppose, however, refer to them, which is some satisfaction.

I remember when a boy hearing that interesting personage called by some Ben Butler, rise upon the floor of the House of Representatives and ask if it were in order to say another member of the House (mentioning that member by name) was a liar. The Speaker said that such a remark was certainly not in order. "Then," said Ben Butler, "I will not say it." If, ladies and gentlemen, it is not in order to refer to the fact that a certain man we know is a nobleman of the first water, we will not say it, but merely refer to the fact that we are not allowed to express our sentiments on that subject.

It was the great Napoleon who, when petitioned to close the reading rooms of Paris because of their tendency, in an excited time, to lead men to think too much for themselves—it was Napoleon, the mightiest of soldiers and statesmen, who answered :

"I will never do that, for I recall that when a poor man, without home or friends in France, how that the days of a long winter were spent by me in a humble reading room; how there in the story of great men and greater nations which they made and ruled, I found the knowledge and the power which has made me ruler of my country and, if it please God, the knowledge which may some day make me ruler of the world." God had other and more solemn lessons to teach by the life of the man of Austerlitz than by making him ruler of the world; but the fact remains that the royal and splendid mind which turned a mad and murderous mob into a peaceful nation, the Reign of Terror into an era of joyful prosperity; the mind which more than all others in fair France encouraged for long years art, literature, and human progress, found its first strength and purpose in the books of a public reading room.

To what happy results this Reading Room may lead no one here can fully say. It will, I am sure, give to many a pleasant and profitable hour. You have but to read the well-planned course of lectures, to see the games and other healthful recreations which have been provided, the well applied writing room—above all, that kingly company of splendidly selected books—to know that here is

gain without loss, enjoyment without reaction.

Then, too, this Reading Room will, I doubt not, lead us in its kindly way to a better recognition of the fact that we are brother men here, bound by sacred obligation, each to do his part for the common welfare. In such a town as ours, in any town bordering upon a great city there is a danger of a selfish spirit getting into fashion, and all people saying in effect, "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindermost." Into such a community comes a man and gives for the general welfare and happiness not only an enormously costly gift, but, what is far more, days and days of personal interest; hour after hour through now nearly a year—hours that could have easily been spent in making thousands of dollars—have instead been passed here quietly in our midst, watching every detail, studying every advantage for the comfort and happiness of those for whom this library has been built. Surely such an example must have its weight in leading others to a better recognition of the sacred obligation that a man owes a duty not only to himself and his family, but to the community where he lives. Let such a principle be accepted by half the men of Westchester and this place will be changed into a prosperous and beautiful town in a single year.

This Reading Room will lead also to a higher culture in our midst—literary as well as moral. Do not mistake the good old word culture for that new thing called "cultyar." To have "cultyar" one must be able to talk through the telephone in Greek, telegraph in Syriac and say Grace in Sanskrit. "Cultyar" is a disease, brought on by conceit, pedantry, and superficial knowledge. But culture is first of all simply good common sense. Culture is merely the constant choice of the highest within our reach. The man who chooses to read history, biography, good poetry, wholesome fiction, rather than the passing mass of trash which one skims but to forget, is a man of culture. The man who thinks kind thoughts and not evil ones of others, who speaks courteous words and not surly ones, is a man of culture. The man who ever chooses the noble and heroic rather than the mean and selfish—who ever sees beyond the temporal the eternal—is a man of culture. Such a man was Abraham Lincoln. Such a man to-night is the Cardinal Archbishop of Algiers, who, leaving one of the fairest fields of France, has lived and labored now these many years for the poor, the wronged and the desolate of Africa. Such a man for the sake of his fellow-men chose one of the hardest tasks man

ever undertook—the task to break down, almost single-handed, the slave trade of Africa. To accomplish such a work he left nearly all that home and friendship and human love had to give. But he chose the highest and best. Some day, it is said, he may be the next Pope of Rome. However that may be, it is true that some day he will stand among the white-robed multitude of those who have been faithful unto death. The story of such a man's life is found in this Reading Room. To what noble results may such an example lead others? This brings us, ladies and gentlemen, to the best result of all to which this princely offering may lead, and that is its influence in leading men to live for the eternal rather than the temporal. What is this Reading Room, however costly, and all philanthropy, however magnificent, if that is the end of it? Not worth the mortar between the stones, nor the rust upon buried iron, if that is the only end to which it leads.

The man who has built this Library is not in any pronounced sense either a Protestant, a Churchman, or a Roman Catholic. Every Church, as he understands it, excludes somebody, and his great heart cannot bear the thought of the poorest dog being left out at the last. Whether he is right or wrong is not for us to-night to say; but whatever

be his faith, this is true of the man (if I know him at all) that he respects the faith of any other man if that man's faith is sincere and honest and real, and he would be glad, whatever may come to himself at last, if any truth here found would lead a man to find in the end that kindly light which lights the world to come. For the spirit which rules the heart of Collis Potter Huntington often draws close to the spirit of that majestic prayer which we of the Catholic Church have said in all ages—that prayer which pleads to God that "When we have served Him in our generation we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience, in the communion of the Catholic Church, in the confidence of a certain faith, in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope, in favor with our God and in perfect charity with the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

RESOLUTION.

The following resolution was offered by A. Wardner Harrington:

Resolved, that the people of Westchester as represented by those gathered here to-night do take this time and opportunity of expressing to Mr. C. P. Huntington our appreciation of, and thanks for his noble gift, and pledge ourselves to aid him in his purposes for good, by all the means which lie within our power.

The Chairman called for a rising vote on the motion, whereupon the whole assemblage rose and, led by the Rev. A. McMillan, gave three rousing cheers for Mr. Huntington.

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